

REMARKS

Claim 1-46 and 57-61 remain pending in this application. Based on the foregoing amendments and following remarks, entry of this amendment and reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-5, 8-10, 26-28, 31-34, and 59 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by, or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious over, U.S. Patent No. 6,669,692, issued to Nelson et al. ("Nelson"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, since Nelson does not disclose each and every element required by these claims, as amended.

In particular, independent claims 1 and 26 have been amended to respectively include the limitations of claims 6 and 29, which the Examiner has objected to but indicated as reciting patentable subject matter. Notably, the limitation "a porosity in the range of 20-80 percent," which the Examiner has essentially not given any patentable weight, has been cancelled from independent claims 1 and 26.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claims 1 and 26, as well as the claims depending therefrom (claims 2-5, 8-10, 27, 28, 31-34, and 59), are allowable over the cited prior art, and as such, respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant graciously acknowledges the allowance of claims 11-25, 35-46, 57, 58, 60, and 61. The limitations of claims 6 and 29, which the Examiner has indicated as reciting

patentable subject matter, have been respectively incorporated into independent claims 1 and 26. Because claims 6 and 29, which have been amended to include other limitations, and original claims 7 and 30, depend from respective claims 1 and 26, it is believed that these claims are allowable for the same reasons as claims 1 and 26.

Conclusion

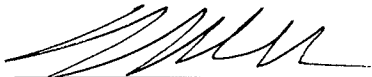
Based on the foregoing, it is believed that all claims are now allowable and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding this amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at (949) 724-1849.

Respectfully submitted,

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